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66TH CONGRESS, 1st Session. | SENATE. | REPORT No. 15.

U.S. Congress. Senate. Committee on Foreign relations

NATIONAL PEACE POLICY.

JUNE 12, 1919.—Ordered to be printed.

Mr. KNOX, from the Committee on Foreign Relations, submitted the following

REPORT.

[To accompany S. Res. 76.]

The Committee on Foreign Relations, to whom was referred Senate resolution 76, defining a peace treaty which shall assure to the people of the United States the attainment of the ends for which they entered the war, and declaring the policy of our Government to meet fully obligations to ourselves and to the world, having had the same under consideration, report it with an amendment, as follows:

On page 4, strike out section 5, lines 13 to 23, inclusive.

So that the resolution as amended will read as follows:

Whereas the Congress of the United States in declaring, pursuant to its exclusive authority under the Constitution, the existence of a state of war between the United States and the Imperial German Government, solemnly affirmed that the Imperial Government has so "committed repeated acts of war against the Government and the people of the United States" that a state of war had been thrust upon them by that Government, and thereupon formally pledged the whole military and national resources of the country "to bring the conflict to a successful termination"; and

Whereas the Senate of the United States, being a coequal part of the treaty-making power of this Government, and therefore coequally responsible for any treaty which is concluded and ratified, is deeply concerned over the draft treaty of peace negotiated at Versailles by which it is proposed to end our victorious war and is gravely impressed by the fact that its provisions appear calculated to force upon us undesirable and far-reaching covenants inimical to our free institutions under the penalty that failing to accept these we shall continue in a state of war while our cobelligerents shall be at peace and enjoying its blessings; that is it proposed to make us parties to a league of nations, under a plan as to which the people of the United States have had neither time to examine and consider nor opportunity to express regarding it a matured and deliberate judgment, whereas the treaty may be easily so drawn as to permit the making of immediate peace, leaving the question of the establishment of a league of nations for later determination; and that the treaty as drawn contains principles, guaranties, and undertakings obliterative of legitimate race and national aspirations, oppressive of weak nations and peoples, and destructive of human progress and liberty: Therefore be it

Resolved, That the Senate of the United States will regard as fully adequate for our national needs and as completely responsive to the duties and obligations we owe to our cobelligerents and to humanity, a peace treaty which shall assure to the United States and its people the attainment of those ends for which we entered the war, and that it will look with disfavor upon all treaty provisions going beyond these ends.

2. That since the people of the United States have themselves determined and provided in their Constitution the only ways in which the Constitution may be amended, and since amendment by treaty stipulation is not one of the methods which the people have so prescribed, the treaty-making power of the United States has no authority to make a treaty which in effect amends the Constitution of the United States, and the Senate of the United States can not advise and consent to any treaty provision which would have such effect, if enforced.

3. That the Senate advises, in accordance with its constitutional right and duty, that the great paramount, if not the sole duty of the peace conference is quickly to bring all the belligerents a full and complete peace; that to this end, the treaty shall be so drawn as to permit any nation to reserve without prejudice to itself for future separate and full consideration by its people the question of any league of nations, that neither such an article nor the exercise of the rights reserved thereunder, whether at the time of signature, the time of ratification, or at any other time, shall affect the substance of the obligations of Germany and its cobelligerents under the treaty, nor the validity of signature and ratification on their behalf; and that any indispensable participation by the United States in matters covered by the league covenant shall, pending the entry of the United States into the league, be accomplished through diplomatic commissions which shall be created with full power in the premises.

4. That this resolution indicates and gives notice of the limits of the present obligations against the United States in which the Senate of the United States is now prepared to acquiesce by consenting to the ratification of a treaty embodying peace conditions that may be found otherwise acceptable to its judgment, and that the adoption by the peace conference of the foregoing reasonable limitations and positions will facilitate the early acceptance of the treaty of peace by the Senate of the United States, will in no wise interfere with the league of nations as between these countries prepared to ratify the treaty without further consideration and will afford such a manifestation of real respect for the wishes of a great people as can not fail more firmly to cement the friendship already existing between ourselves and our cobelligerents.

Your committee recommend that the resolution be passed as amended.

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